

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of controlling user access, by one or more users each having associated therewith a wireless communications device, to content transmitted across a communications medium, comprising:

detecting a presence of one or more users in at least one region in which content receivable by at least one receiver terminal may be consumed via the one or more users' wireless communications devices by wireless communications; and

determining access rights to content based on the detected one or more users, the access rights defining a suitability or unsuitability of one or more users to consume content.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein content is broadcasted or multicasted for receipt by the receiver terminal.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the region is defined by a communications range of the receiver terminal.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the detecting a presence further comprises detecting a location of a user's communications device and determining whether the user's communications device is within the region.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determined access rights is determined according to at least an access rights level of one detected user, the access rights level enables determination of a suitability or unsuitability of particular content or content-types for consumption by the user.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the access rights level indicates one of a maturity of a user, suitable content type, and unsuitable content-type.

7. The method according to claim 5, wherein the determined access rights comprises a highest or lowest access rights level of the detected users.

8. The method according to claim 5, wherein the determined access rights is based according to a combination of access rights level of the detected users.

9. The method according to claim 5, further comprising receiving an access rights level of a user from the user's communications device.

10. The method according to claim 5, further comprising retrieving an access rights level for one or more detected users from a storage facility.

11. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
selectively controlling access or consumption of receivable content by the one or more detected users according to at least one of the determined access rights and access rating of receivable content.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein the selectively controlling access comprises filtering received content for output by the receiver terminal to restrict or allow access or consumption of received content according to the determined access rights.

13. The method according to claim 11, wherein the selectively controlling access comprises filtering a content guide indicating content or content-types receivable by the receiver terminal.

14. The method according to claim 13, further comprising receiving the content guide from a remote location.

15. The method according to claim 13, wherein the content guide comprises a broadcast program guide.

16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the content guide comprises one or more items indicating receivable content or content-type, the items being configured in a hierarchical parent-child structure in which an access rating of a child item can not exceed an access rating of a parent item.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein the filtering comprises preventing processing of an unsuitable item and any associated child items of the content guide based on the determined access rights.

18. The method according to claim 11, wherein the selectively controlling access comprises controlling searching or selection of content or content-type by a user based on the determined access rights.

19. The method according to claim 11, wherein the selectively controlling access comprises controlling receipt of content from the receivable content by the receiver terminal based on the determined access rights.

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the controlling receipt of content comprises abstaining from receiving data burst of content determined unsuitable for access or consumption based on the determined access rights.

21. The method according to claim 20, wherein the abstaining from receiving data burst comprises powering down at least content receiving components of the receiver terminal during data bursts of content determined unsuitable.

22. The method according to claim 21, further comprising receiving receivable content including an electronic watermark indicating an access rating for the content.

23. The method according to claim 1, further comprising dynamically updating the determined access rights.

24. The method according to claim 23, wherein the dynamically updating comprises determining a new access rights upon a triggering event comprising one of detection of a new user, detection of a user leaving the region, detection of a powering down of the wireless communications device of a detected user, and detection of a change in an access rights profile on the wireless communications device of a detected user.

25. The method according to claim 23, further comprising dynamically updating access or consumption control of receivable content according to the updated determined access rights.

26. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determined access rights is determined for a period of time.

27. A method of controlling user access to content receivable by a terminal across a communications medium, comprising:

maintaining a content guide including at least items identifying available content or content-types receivable by a terminal for consumption and access rating for receivable content, the items of the content guide being arranged in a parent-child hierarchical structure having a hierarchy rule in which an access rating of a child item does not exceed an access rating of a corresponding parent item; and

providing the content guide to the terminal.

28. The method according to claim 27, further comprising:  
receiving information for updating a content guide;  
determining whether the update complies with the hierarchy rule; and  
allowing or restricting the update based on the determination.

29. The method according to claim 27, wherein the providing comprises broadcasting the content guide from a content provider.

30. The method according to claim 27, wherein the content guide includes information concerning available programs and transmission times of the programs.

31. The method according to claim 27, wherein the content guide is one of an Electronic Program Guide (EPG) and an Electronic Service Guide (ESG).

32. A method of implementing access of content receivable by a terminal across a communication medium, comprising:

receiving from a remote location a content guide including at least items identifying receivable content or content-types receivable by a terminal for consumption and access rating for receivable content, the items of the content guide being arranged in a parent-child hierarchical structure having a hierarchy rule in which an access rating of a child item does not exceed an access rating of a corresponding parent item of the content guide; and

controlling access or consumption of receivable content according to an access rights level of a user associated with the terminal and the access rating of content from the content guide.

33. The method according to claim 34, wherein the controlling access comprises filtering items of the content guide based on the access rights level for the user.

34. The method according to claim 35, wherein the filtering comprises processing items of the content guide based on the access rights level for the user.

35. The method according to claim 36, wherein the processing items comprises abstaining from processing a parent item and any associated child items when an access rating of the parent item exceeds the access rights level of the user.

36. A method of implementing access control over receivable content by a terminal, comprising:

receiving content having an electronic watermark indicating an access rating associated with the content; and

controlling access to the content by at least one user of the terminal according to the access rating.

37. The method according to claim 36, wherein access to content is controlled according to the access rating and an access rights level of the user.

38. A content receiver terminal for controlling user access, by one or more users each having associated therewith a wireless communications device, to content delivered across a communications medium, comprising:

a detection module for detecting a presence of one or more users in at least one region in which the delivered content may be consumed via the one or more users' wireless communications devices by wireless communications; and

an access rights module for determining access rights to delivered content based on the detected one or more users, the access rights defining a suitability of unsuitability of one or more users to consume content.

39. A computer-readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method of controlling user access, by one or more users each having associated therewith a wireless communications device, to content receivable across a communications medium, performed by a content receiver terminal, the method comprising:

detecting a presence of one or more users in at least one region in which the receivable content may be consumed via the one or more users' wireless communications devices by wireless communications; and

determining access rights to receivable content based on the detected one or more users, the access rights defining a suitability or unsuitability of one or more users to consume content.